

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The present invention provides a method and apparatus for a visual browser that allows users to browse products (e.g. goods and services) over a computer network, such as the Internet. The visual browser of the present invention allows a user to navigate a virtual store, without needing to express verbally what they are looking for (i.e. an explicit method), and instead provides non-explicit methods for virtual shopping. In particular, after a user picks a main product, the visual browser automatically presents similar and related products to the user providing opportunities for the user to view and possibly purchase these other related products. The visual browser creates a plurality of categories in which each category identifies an attribute. Products having at least one attribute are associated with at least one category. Upon the selection of a main product by a user, the visual browser displays other related products having at least one attribute in common with the main product. In other embodiments, the visual browser also displays products that are not related to the main product. Also, in some embodiments, a weight bias factor is assigned to each category based upon a predefined importance of the respective category to the operator of the virtual store. For example, a category for best-selling products may be given a high weight bias factor. The visual browser by automatically exposing users to other products that are similar or related to the main product originally selected by the user, as well as non-related products, increases the user's exposure to available products and provides opportunities for serendipitous impulse purchases.